

NOVEMBER 1959

motive



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FRONT COVER ART: THE SLEEPERS BY ROBERT HODGELL. attention is focused on the disciples who slept while Christ prayed at gethsemane; hodgell's graphics are featured this month, beginning on page 14.

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A REMINDER

BOB HODGELL

second coming

CHRISt came again
as he said he would.

The photographers
met him at the airport
to get his likeness
for posterity.

And a man
bearing a microphone
asked him:
"Please, Mr. Christ,
will you tell all the
folks at home
what you think
of the World Situation?"

And Christ said:
"The time is now."

They crucified him all so neatly,
taking every sanitary precaution.

And on the third day
without any coast-to-coast hookup
he asked them:
"Are there ten good men
in all of
Metropolitan Greater New York
including suburbs and exurbs?"

And there were rumors of war.

—William Robert Miller



THE FAITH SITUATION

BY JOSEPH SITTLER, JR.

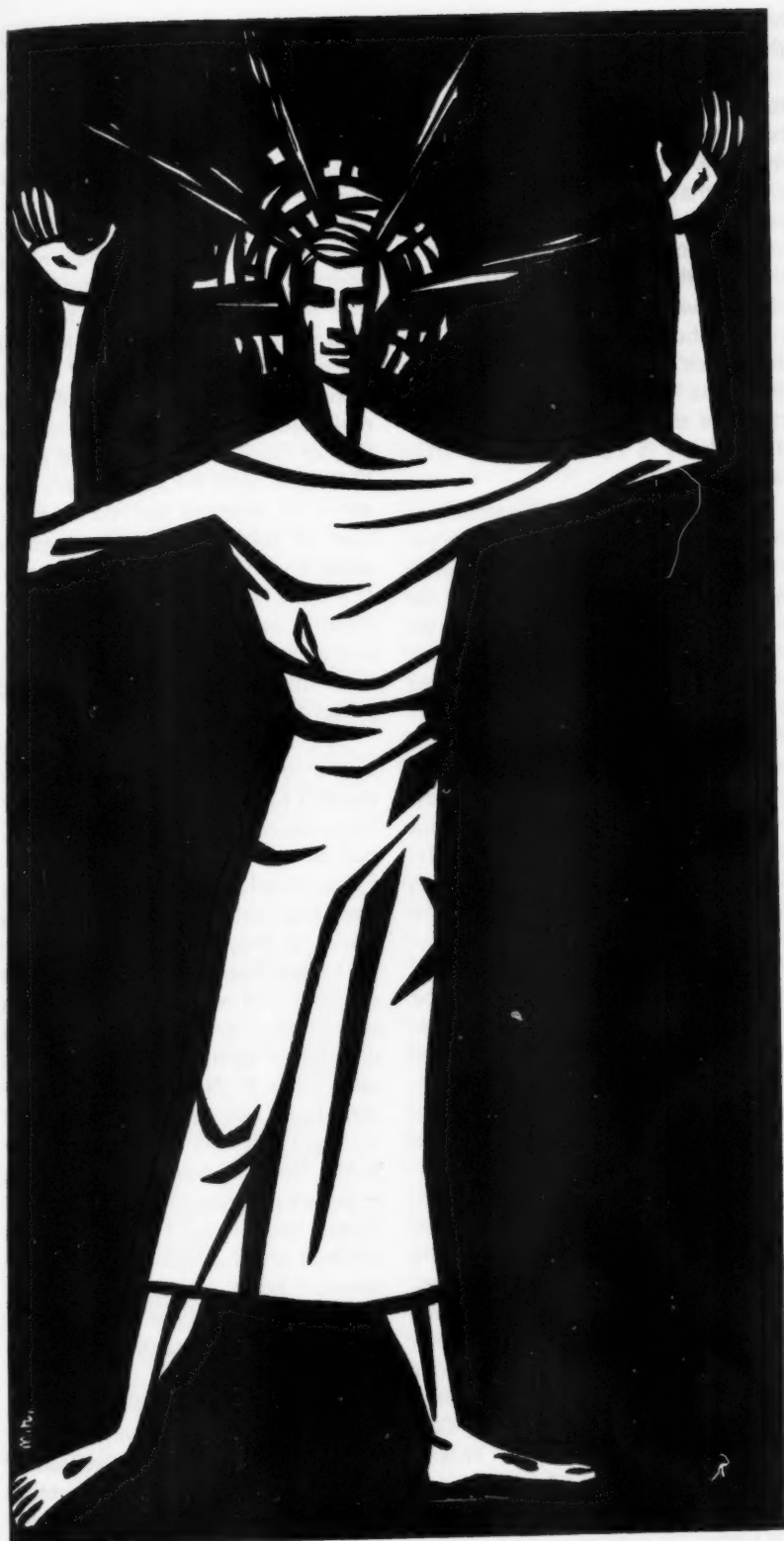
WORDS ARE THE THINGS WE use to communicate realities, and when words become fouled up, fuzzed up, and woolly, the realities that they are supposed to convey just don't get conveyed. This is particularly important if the reality is important.

For instance, how shall one communicate to generation after generation the real meaning of sin, and of grace, and of redemption, and of faith, if the coinage itself has

been debased? How shall I handle the magnificence of the meaning of the words "the grace of God" in a too fat and prosperous generation that is primarily concerned with gracious living in terms of wallboard-to-wallboard carpeting, and thinks the grace of God is the heavenly vocabulary for good old graciousness? Or how shall one talk about the enormous significance of what it means to be a redeemed man if the term redemption has been

used in such a woolly and imprecise way that it no longer carries any weight?

NOW I want to conduct an inquiry into the meaning of the word "faith." I want to do it in this way: To try to illustrate several ways in which our culture is using the word to expose meanings with which we in our common life invest the word to be really untrue to the biblical meaning, and then by biblical



CHRIST BEFORE THOMAS

MARGARET RIGG

November 1959

illustrations put over against that exposure the thing the Bible means by faith.

I begin with an illustration for which you can have a counterpart wherever you live. In my town there is a shop, Marshall Field & Company, in which I sometimes incautiously buy things, and my wife more often, and every once in a while I get a letter from them because we do not buy enough. Not long ago I got a letter from Marshall Field which said, "My dear Sir, we are happy that in the past you have found it good to use our services, and we observe from an examination of our accounts that you have not recently used your charge account. If we have in any way offended you, or failed to give you good service, we hope you will come to see us, and by all means reactivate your relationship to our store, because we have faith in you." No, they do not have any faith in me at all. They are crazy if they do. What they really have in me is the Credit Association's report that, as a man of moderate circumstances, I don't do too badly about paying my bills, given enough time. What they mean is that they can take a sufficient markup, and they do, to cover a few unfortunate accidents where otherwise honest people can't come through on the bill. They don't have faith in me. What they have is an accurately, mathematically defensible, calculated risk, and they ought not use the great word faith to talk about a merchandising risk. That is not a right use of the word.

Or take another one: We use the word faith to indicate a kind of confidence that men have in themselves, or that we have in other people. Now, confidence is a good Latin word which has a completely sound and legitimate meaning, but it is not the same as the biblical word faith. It is all right for me to say, I have confidence in myself, if I mean by that I know what I can do and what I can't. I can make a rational assessment of what my weaknesses are and what my strengths are and try to

live according to the one and avoid the temptations of the other. This is a rational assessment, the outcome of which ought to be a rational self-confidence. Or, I may say I have confidence in you in a certain situation, meaning that I have read your past performance in such a way, or I have assessed your person and character in such a way, that I think you are probably no worse than I am and I would trust you about as much as I would trust myself, and therefore I have confidence in you. But I ought not to have faith in you, and you ought not to have faith in me. The great word faith means that in which one reposes his ultimate trust. You ought to repose nothing ultimate in



me, and I ought to repose nothing ultimate in you. We ought to have a reasonable, and even an affectional confidence in one another, but we not only are not encouraged by the Bible to have faith in one another, we are told with the most severe warning, you are not to have faith in men at all.

This brings us to the first point: That faith is a term used Christianly to indicate something about God and man and the relationship between them, and is not properly used of anything else. Faith is something that indicates how I am related to God. It is never a term properly to indicate how I am related to you, or

Marshall Field & Company, or something else.

Let us use another illustration as to the seductions that surround this term faith, particularly in our democracy. We have gotten so religious that we are in danger of becoming unchristian. We have become so completely enamored of the idea that we are a religious people that we are becoming a little bit stupid about what constitutes the difference between a general religiousness and a particular understanding of the God-man relationship which is called the Christian faith.

Therefore we are very sloppy in our use of language. The leading politicals are now saying that America is built upon faith; that unless we enhance and increase our faith we will be endangered as a people. Now, what they mean to say is, that unless we take a very clear look at ourselves we shall go on being intoxicated with a false image of ourselves, and that is the truth. Or that unless we become quite realistic about our performance, we shall become a little bit stupid about the competing performances that other people are putting on or of which they are capable. Or, it is all right to say that if people think they are licked in the first inning, they don't do the other innings so well as if they entertained the suspicion that they might win. This is all rational stuff. But to use the word faith in a political sense to mean that it is a religious affirmation that redemptive resources are inherent in a national history is not faith; it is idolatry. A lie is what the Old Testament calls it. This is damnation, to believe that there are redemptive resources in the children of George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Abraham Lincoln, which are somehow by the grace of God unavailable to other people. This is a form of idolatry, and of pride. It comes not under the blessing of God, but under his wrath.

OR to believe by the worst use of the word faith that there is, as it were, something in our religious

tradition which is altogether peculiar, precious, and good, in a sort of national tube, like toothpaste, and when we get in a mess, or begin to be fragmented, or lose our confidence, we ought to squeeze out more of it because the use of religious faith is to hold the Republic together. Now we are hearing an enormous amount of this stuff in our day, that it is good to have faith because this will insure the history of our country, or the future of our national story. Do you not see that the real object of faith, then, is not the God of faith but our national story? If I want faith for my nation's sake above all, then my real god is not the God of faith, but my real god is what I want faith for—the nation. If I want faith in order that my personality may be integrated thereby, and seek it first of all for that reason, then my real god is the integrated personality and not faith.

We are often told that people ought to have a religious faith because it keeps them from going nuts. They do not say it quite that way but in many kinds of vocabulary. Fewer people go off the beam, or off the deep end, or go rocker, you know, if they have a certain faith. So I have heard many psychologists say that you ought to have faith in something. It doesn't make much difference what, but for heaven's sake have faith in something. Get something and wrap your life around it. They call this faith. This is not faith. This is a frantic search for an organizing center. This is not a religious issue in the first place; it is a rational and human issue. Now we know, I hope, the way faith ought not to be used; the way this big biblical concept ought not to be debased or blasphemed.

LET us look at the way the New Testament uses it. Instead of talking abstractly, I want to retell in brief form an unusual story. Jesus came near the town in which there was a Roman officer in charge of the occupying force. Now you can imagine how a town would regard the officer of the day in charge of these

Romans, who ought not to be there at all. He would not be a very popular character, we may assume. That makes it the more astonishing that when Jesus came near the gates of Capernaum there met him at the gate a group of elders of the Jews who had been asked by the Roman centurion to come to Jesus in his name with the request. That is not so surprising, but it is surprising that they did it. Jews going to request a favor of a Jewish rabbi for a Roman who ought to clear out of the place as soon as possible.

As they made the report to our Lord, they said: This man has a son who is sick, and he requests that you come and heal his son. Rumors of the healing ministry of Jesus had apparently leaked through. And then they added, he is worthy that you should do this for him because he has loved our people and has built us a synagogue. Now you will acknowledge that this was an unusual Roman, and an unusual Jewish report about a Roman. Not many sergeants

build schoolhouses for the people whose towns they occupy. This man did not look down his Roman nose at these people, but had a certain regard, and even affection apparently, for them, and tried to understand the strange structure of this religious group who trained their people in synagogues.

Therefore they came and said, he is worthy that you should do this, and the Lord started down the road toward his house. While he was on the way, a second delegation met him, this time dispatched by the centurion himself, from his own personal staff, as it were. These staff members came to Jesus and said, our master has sent us to you to deliver this message. He said that we should say to you, Sir, that he is not worthy that you should come under his roof, nor is he worthy that he should come to you.

Now what is back of that? It takes a bit of knowing of the Oriental situation and of the Jewish religion. The phrase, "he is not worthy that you should come under his roof," is what one calls in Old Testament studies an idiomatic Semitism, a Jewish phrase that has its own peculiar meaning. I think I can illustrate the peculiarity of that meaning by something closer home than Israel. North and South Dakota are overrun with Norwegians, as you know. Up there they have peculiar and delightful ways about the business of drinking coffee. For instance, if you are invited to drink coffee with a Norwegian, you have made it, you are in; and until you have been asked to drink coffee you are not in, you are an *Auslander*, an outsider. So when you have coffee with a Norwegian, this is pretty much like the Jewish custom of "coming under the roof."

When you are invited to come under the roof of a Jewish family, and do it, this is an outward and visible sign that you accept and hereby announce personal responsibility for one another in deepest ties of friendship. The Roman knew this, and he knew what it meant for a Jew, with that symbolic understanding of the

other man's roof and his house, to come under the roof of a Roman occupying officer. Therefore he said, "Sir, it is not right, for I am not worthy that you should come under my roof, nor am I worthy to come to you." Now listen to the astonishing statement: "You just say the word and my son will be healed." Then the report about this astounding centurion goes on with an equally astounding elaboration. He says, see here, I am a man under authority too. I am a soldier. I stand in authority between those above me and those under me. I say to this man go, and he goes. And I say to that man come, and he comes. And therefore, because I understand what authority is, I say to you, you just say the word and it will be done.

PAUSE a moment on this word "authority" because unless we know with precision what these words mean in the New Testament we are liable to put the wrong coats on them. The Greek word for authority in the New Testament does not mean just power. There is another word for that. I can illustrate the difference between power and authority with a little story I stole from Gilbert Chesterton. He is talking about these two words in an essay, and he said the difference between power and authority is like this: If I am in a restaurant in London having dinner, and an elephant walks in the door and demands my chop, I would be the first to acknowledge his power—and the last to acknowledge his authority.

Power, therefore, means that by virtue of which one can take what he wants, but authority means that whole subterranean force by which one affirms what he affirms, or does what he does. Our Lord Jesus Christ had no power in the elephant sense. He had enormous authority. All who heard him marveled at the authority with which he spoke. So this Roman, a man from an external culture to the Jews, says, "Sir, I know authority when I see it." He uses the military analogy but he obviously means something more than military con-





65 light

tent. He does not talk about bayonets. "I know authority when I see it. You have it. You say the word, and my child will be healed."

And we read, "and Jesus turned in amazement." The word translated "astonished" or "amazed" is not strong enough. The word here means "seized with an ecstasy," which transcends mere cognitive or rational apprehension. Jesus "astonished," or "stunned," would be a better translation. Positively "stunned" by what he heard, our Lord turned upon those who were with him and said: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." That is not my word for it; that is his word for it.

Now the point is, what is the situation to which our Lord says, "This is it—this is faith"? Let's use one more illustration, this time involving not a centurion but a woman, not a sick son but a sick daughter, involving not a physical illness but a mental disturbance, which in the New Testament is often called "in the grip of the demon." Three Gospels tell this story.

Matthew has it this way: He came to the borders of Syrophenicia and there a woman met him—sometimes called the Canaanitish woman, sometimes the Syrophenician. The Bible says she "worshiped" him. Worship in the New Testament means usually to fall upon one's knees and grasp the other around the knees in supplication. It is a physical action. She worshipped him, and in deep torment she cried out, "My daughter, Sir, it is about my daughter that I must talk to you. She is sick and nothing has been done for her. Can you not come to my house and make well my daughter?" Now observe that our Lord does something which is altogether unusual in the New Testament. The first thing he says to her is, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In other words, this is saying, translated into Canaanitish, "You don't belong to the club. My charter does not extend to you."

And we read that after this rebuff the woman petitioned him the

more violently, and he says something even worse. He says, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Now even "dogs" is undertranslated, not because the word isn't dog, but because the word means something that side of Suez other than it means here. That side of Suez a dog is a snapping, yapping animal that is a kind of community garbage disposal system, that runs around the streets eating what it can. Therefore, when you call a person a dog in the East it is much worse than it is even in Virginia. So when our Lord says it is not right to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs, this is about as rough as one can get. Even under this kind of pounding, as it were, the woman does not crumple up. She starts tugging at the sleeves of the disciples, and says, "Would you intercede with your Master?" They go to the Master and say, please do something about this woman. The woman then comes to our Lord, falls to her knees, and simply cries, "Lord, help." And then we read precisely the same thing, "And the Lord turned to those about him and said, 'I have not beheld such faith, no, not among the religious. You go your way. It will be all right.'"

NOW the usual interpretation of the woman is that Jesus was testing her faith. There are two things wrong with that. In the first place, there is no evidence in the New Testament that Jesus ever tested anyone's faith in this cat-and-mouse brutal way. It is altogether out of character. There is no evidence that that was what he was doing. But the internal nature of the story reveals what it means. This woman is an outsider, and apparently she heard there was a "healing man" coming this way. This was a Semitic phrase for these fellows who went around the countryside doing healings—and the woods were full of them. She thought she might as well take a chance on it, so she goes after Jesus and says, Lord come to my house and take care of my daughter. And our Lord brusquely puts her aside.

Does this perhaps mean that when you want to use God, he will not be used—that you destroy what you want to use if you seek it primarily to use it? You have to be bounced off that position before the right relationship can be set up. And our Lord pushes this woman farther and farther back, until finally out of the center of a torment she cries, Aye, Sir, but among us even the little puppies that scramble around on our earthen floors in our cottages, even they can have the crumbs that careless children of the house brush off the table; even the little puppies are not denied that.

Then it is that our Lord, knowing now, as it were, that she speaks not in an experimental, or a political understanding of faith, but that the whole of her need is laid over against what he is, said, "Go thy way"—this is the real thing.

THESE stories which lift up the meaning of the word faith say to us that when the vitalities of the Christian faith, incarnated in the action of God in Jesus Christ, like the understanding of sin, like the thundering demonstration of love, like forgiveness, like faith, these vitalities must not be shaded off into the higher reaches of our humanities. These must not be identified with mere self-confidence, or a jolly out-

look upon life, or a more or less rational reading according to Marshall Field's credit bureau. These words have their own interior meaning, and their own interior power. Faith is a term with which to designate that comprehensive or total trust of myself with all the need of the self, in the self's Giver, no less than God himself. To trust in God—this is faith.

Now this, to be sure, bears certain ways in the world; it bears a new kind of confidence which is not self-confidence. It bears a kind of faithfulness which is something more than mere "one can be counted on." It bears forth a kind of gaiety in the world which is not just the product of a good metabolism and a decent blood pressure. Faith bears forth its characteristic stance in life—a Christian hilarity, a Christian trust, a Christian kind of mind. The Bible always shows us, not an abstraction about faith, but people putting the whole weight of their life anxiety in the hands of the Man from God.

Therefore when that happens, no matter in whom it happens, whether he be an accredited Jew, or Baptist, or Lutheran, or Methodist, or a Roman, or an outsider, when and where that happens, it is not the preacher but the Lord of the Church who says, This is it, and I have not found it like this even among the religious.



themes in counterpoint:

SUCCESS, F.

BY MALCOLM BOYD

THE THEMES OF SUCCESS AND failure are strangely overlapping ones in our day. While persons indeed seek the visible marks of success, they often experience an emptiness at the heart of their search.

"Who *am* I? What am I here *for*?" Many a successful person, who has met the standard material wants, asks these questions. The F. Scott Fitzgerald world is passé and one cannot seek anymore the same blasé escapes. We live A.B., After the Bomb, and there is a tension which is truly catholic and which no man can avoid sharing. Therefore, we have come to know that John Donne said poetically and theologically what is existential fact: *ask not for whom the bell tolls*. . . .

Even the early Hemingway world is done for. People do not talk like that anymore. Perhaps the secret of Mr. Brando's celebrity, aside from an S.S. corps of press agents, is that he incarnates the new rhythm, the new tone of voice, in his way of speaking, as for example in the film *The Wild One*. Maybe many persons who detest that rhythm and tone but are inescapably held by it know that it is real, whereas the voices around them represent role-playing and only surface portraiture.

We live in the William Whyte world where persons are encased in organizations and ideas in molds. We live in the David Riesman world where nobody in the same peer-group wants a better-looking house or car—unless others in the peer-

group have such things—but wants almost desperately to be inside the in-group, which means being the same. We live in the A. C. Spector-sky world of exurbs and martinis, where vodka follows gin, and tequila follows vodka, onion follows olive, and a twist of lemon follows onion and then nothing follows a twist of lemon: one must be aware of trends. "Who *am* I? What am I here *for*?"

Too, we live in the "Angry Young Men" world of rebels. Colin Wilson analyzes the makeup and significance of *The Outsider*, while one of John Osborne's characters in the play *Look Back in Anger* says:

Nobody thinks, nobody cares. No beliefs, no convictions and no enthusiasm. Just another Sunday evening.

Into the sad, strange overlapping of success and failure have come key figures as cult-symbols. The cult of success is boyish, absurd, a bit vulgar, unless there is a visible awareness of overlapping failure, and this may be expressed by a particular cynicism, but bravely, even with a sophisticated bravado. The cult of failure is utterly meaningless, morbid, out-of-touch, unless it is consciously placed within the framework of success. In culture-symbols the rich, too, must appear, for psychological or sociological reasons, to be devoid of pretension or calculation, albeit deliberately—this, with considerable pretension and planning, ranging from slightly dated station wagons

to Senator John F. Kennedy's hair-cut. The ambitious, cagey, climbing middle class (but with an education) can best emulate the underplayed-rich by mimicking them in nonchalance, remembering, however, that if one does not have shiny shoes he must nonetheless have the right shoulders.

Where the themes of success and failure overlap, there one finds the cult of sadness. In effect, it is perpetuation of restlessness, consciousness of the chaos underlying seeming bourgeois stability and refusal to regard success seriously. The cult's gods are found within contexts of worldly success. The worshipers are the rootless persons at all levels of society who are rootless because they wish to be so—or, because they believe that the only alternative to knowing oneself as rootless is rationalization. Mademoiselle Sagan surely did not launch the cult, with her striking novel *Bonjour, Tristesse*, but her timing was perfect; and her own brush with death in an automobile accident—following the automobile death of James Dean—fitted like a glove the ritual of the cult. What message, reporters anxiously asked Mademoiselle Sagan as she seemed to be balanced between life and death following her crash, what message did the young priestess of *tristesse* have for the worshipers? "Drive carefully," she said. This is the talk of tight blue-jeans, T-shirts, playing *chick* with hot-rods, wild ones on motorcycles, and the lean,

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FAILURE AND TRISTESSE . . .



sad-eyed, hollow-cheeked youth who became the incarnation of smoldering restlessness on the screen in three films and who died a flaming death in a speeding car on a lonely stretch of American highway.

JOHNIE RAY sang "Cry" and people spent nickel after nickel, dime after dime, playing the juke-boxes and vicariously being sad with him. Greta Garbo, by wandering the face of the earth as a pilgrim of *tristesse*, has remained a celebrity legend. Surely this is the time to rediscover Thomas Wolfe, the poet of estrangement, loneliness, pulsating inexpressibility, wandering and hearing the train roar by in the night, its whistle sounding in the distance like a ghost laughing. "Who *am* I? What am I here *for*?"

The cult of sadness finds its peak moment in mass culture, not at midnight, but in the late afternoon. There is suddenly an emptiness in the midst of bustling activity. Offices are emptying, street lights are going on, there is a meal soon to be eaten, there is a time for reflection, there is a pause before renewal of activism; bars are jammed, highways and public vehicles are crowded with humanity, the children's TV is in full-swing. At midnight, in a conformist period of mass culture, few poets tread boulevards, pounding the pavement with fast footsteps, speaking in dialogue with God or stars. There is an owl-movie on TV—and, perhaps, it is even a

rather good movie—and one is distracted by it and occupied.

FOR the Christian, success and failure—and *tristesse*—are major themes, too. The Christian *lives in mass culture like everybody else*. He is conditioned, at least in part, by the same cultural motives, the same drives, the same interlocking themes which move society. However, the Christian is caught in a sharper, more clearly delineated tension than the non-Christian. The Christian has the same success symbols as the non-Christian, yet transcending these is the uniquely Christian example of the world's greatest success: the failure of Jesus Christ on the cross.

The Christian, living vitally always in the New Testament tension of faith and culture—which cannot, finally, be resolved successfully in this life—dwells (if he is a Christian) “in” the world but not “of” it. Experiencing fully all the elements of earthly life, he nevertheless remains (if he is a Christian) something of a pilgrim in a strange land. Always he looks upon the achievement of success differently than his culture regards it. There are few harder jobs than to be a Christian.

The Christian may come to know peace, but his definition of the meaning of peace will differ radically from the world's definition. Karl Barth has accurately written that “there is suffering and sinking, a being lost and a being rent asunder, in the peace of God.” The Christian, living in the hand of the living God,

is molded by holy grace and changed ceaselessly from his “natural desire” as a fallen creature in a fallen world to flee the will of God, to his “natural desire” as a redeemed creature in a redeemed world to seek longingly after the will of God.

The Christian bears that name because he lives “in Christ.” St. Paul, in Galatians 2:20, wrote, “I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer wisely observed that it is wrong to speak of the Christian life, a term which has frequently become meaningless in the world because of its use in describing a manifestly non-Christian life. “We should speak rather of Christ living in us,” Bonhoeffer said. And what naturally follows the application of this? Taking up our cross, and following as closely as possible in the footsteps of Jesus Christ carrying his cross. “If we refuse to take up our cross and submit to suffering and rejection at the hands of men, we forfeit our fellowship with Christ and have ceased to follow him,” Bonhoeffer wrote in *The Cost of Discipleship*. “But if we lose our lives in his service and carry our cross, we shall find our lives again. The opposite of discipleship is to be ashamed of Christ and his cross and all the offense which the cross brings in its train.”

Often, for the Christian, to take up his cross and follow after Jesus Christ will mean to forfeit success in the world—as the world recognizes it—and to seek, by faith alone,

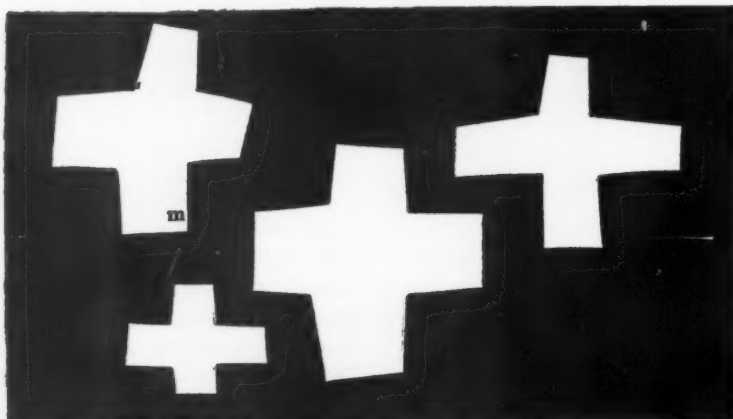
that success in terms of the kingdom of Heaven which will always be mysterious and unfulfilled as a concrete factor in this life. In the same sense, the kingdom of Heaven, while permeating this life—including the life of the Church—may never be identified wholly with it, and its boundaries and passport-bearing citizens and cleanly defined rules will always remain hidden from us, in part, during our sojourn as pilgrims marching through a strange land.

It is said, in the Church, that we must seek for real “point of contact” and this is defined as being where the Christian and the non-Christian meet and, frequently, seem to be speaking the same language.

A real point of contact is the meeting place of the themes in our culture which we call success and failure. At this point of contact, Christian and non-Christian alike experience some similar motivations and seek some similar symbols. This is where the non-Christianized man and the secularized-Christian man have a sharing. Where the language each speaks seems to be the same language, it is more often secularized than Christianized. It is in this area—even, at this place, this point of contact—that the Christian gospel will have to be intelligibly expressed if it is to be made relevant to the world in its need.

Of course, it is obvious that there must be a purification of the Christian witness at this point of contact. The tension between Christian and non-Christian must be magnified and clearly spoken out, yet even while retaining the point of contact and not breaking it. It is a frontier area for Christian evangelism in a largely secularized culture. Religious revival notwithstanding, the point of contact with the secular is extremely important also as a means of clarifying the Christian vocation itself.

In the ministry of silence and listening, and in being able to contrast his goals with non-Christian goals, the Christian may be enabled to understand more simply the nature of the call of Christian vocation to himself.

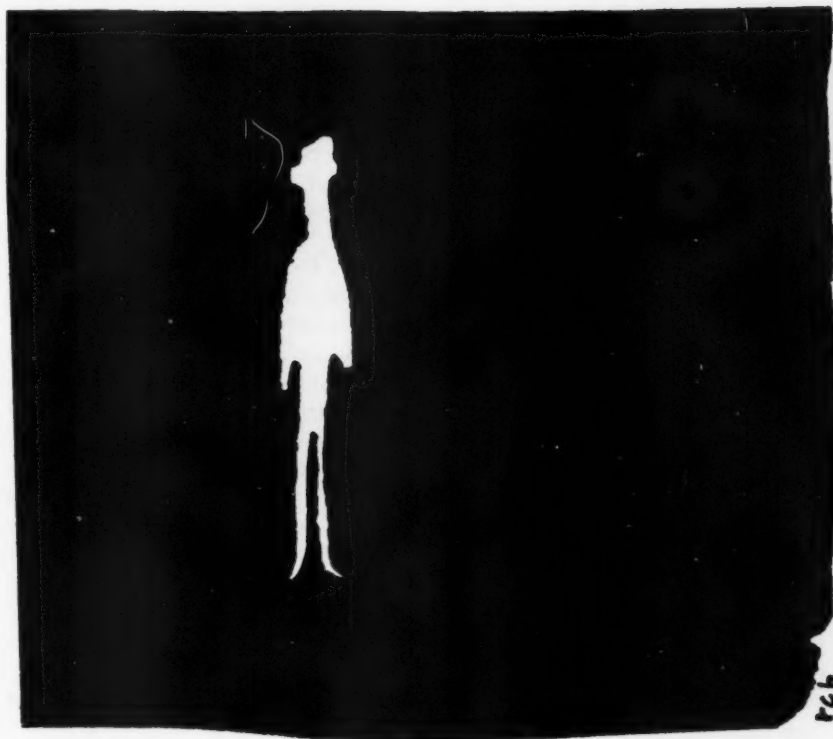


WILLIAM WAS AN ARTIST

A SHORT STORY BY RANDY THRASHER

WILLIAM WAS AN ARTIST. HE had been an artist for as long as he could remember. His days were spent expressing himself on canvas. In fact, he had been expressing himself like this for so long that his studio had become filled with canvases. But when this occurred William had a stroke of genius. He decided he would find a way to use the same canvas over and over again. He only expressed himself for himself. No one else ever saw his work. And besides, the self that he was expressing was always changing. In fact, sometimes his self changed so quickly that he would have to stop in the middle of a canvas and begin to express his newly emerged self. And so the paintings he had done in the past were as worthless as yesterday's newspaper. But, of course, William knew nothing of newspapers. All he knew was his art.

And his limited scope of knowledge hindered him in implementing his idea. He sat down and reviewed his daily life and decided that the only source of any change would be in the food that was at his door every morning. When he awoke he always showered, dressed, and went to the door and picked up the container marked L-I-Q-U-I-D and the package marked S-O-L-I-D which were always there. It was usually his custom to eat and drink bits of each during the day. But on this particular day William decided to save some of the L-I-Q-U-I-D and try to wash the paint off the canvas. This didn't quite work. In fact, this rather badly smeared the work and left the surface rough and gummy. This setback ended the experiment until the beginning of the following week. As usual, William's weekly supply of



canvas, oils, brushes, and thinner were on his doorstep. And also, as usual, William picked up these supplies with his daily food packages. But this Monday morning, contrary to all other Monday mornings, William looked at the paint thinner and realized that here was the answer to his problem. But he didn't have enough. For the first time in his life William was in need. He had always been supplied with enough food, enough painting supplies, enough clothing, enough of everything. But now he needed more paint thinner.

He wandered about the colony asking his fellow artists if they had any extra thinner. But, of course, they didn't. They had been receiving and using the same amount of

thinner for as long as they could remember. When poor William had just about reached the end of his patience, he asked one of his fellow artists where the supplies came from, and if he couldn't ask the supplier for more. The questioned man was flabbergasted. No one had ever asked that question before. All anybody in the colony knew were artists. But somebody must deliver the supplies.

"Funny," he said, "that I never thought of that possibility before."

This comment sent William's mind reeling. A whole new world existed outside his own. He ran back to his studio and tried to express not only himself but this new world as well. But he couldn't do it. He knew

nothing about this world and so he couldn't put it down on canvas. The remainder of the week was spent trying to figure ways of coming into contact with this new world outside. He looked out his window and couldn't see anything but buildings which looked exactly like his own, and he never saw anybody but his fellow artists. Sunday evening when he went to bed he still had not solved his problem. But as he lay there in the dark, a thought struck him. The supplies must be delivered during the night! He got up, ran to the door, and looked out. No supplies.

Now William undertook a bold scheme. He decided not to sleep, but to get behind the door and wait until the deliverer arrived. William waited and waited and finally, just before dawn, a wheeled vehicle came to a stop before his door. A man got out and began unloading the standard weekly supplies of canvas, oil, brushes, and thinner. But before he could complete this operation, William sprang from behind the door, confronted him, and demanded:

"I want more thinner and I also want to meet you."

Needless to say the delivery man was dumbfounded. This was the first time he had ever met anyone who wasn't a delivery man, and he didn't even know what thinner was. William explained that he was an artist and told the man what an artist did. When William pressed him, the delivery man explained how he picked up his truck load of supplies every night and delivered the same quantity to the same doors every week. He thanked William for telling him which of the supplies was thinner and for explaining what it was used for.

William wanted him to stay, but the man, reluctant to talk to such a strange creature at all, beat a hasty retreat—without saying whether or not he could get William the extra thinner. William went back to his easel and painted the most confused and despondent canvases of his life.

But on the following Monday morning William was awakened by a knocking at the door. This was a

very traumatic experience, because it was the first time he had ever been awakened before his usual 7:00 a.m. rising hour. But he went to the door and opened it. There stood the delivery man. And he had the extra thinner. He explained that none of the other delivery men had known how to get more supplies, so William's friend (I use the term even though William, at this time, had no understanding of its meaning) had come to work early and waited until a vehicle, much larger than his own, had pulled up. When the driver had gotten out of the vehicle, the delivery man asked for extra thinner. But, of course, the new man neither knew what thinner was nor did he have an extra of the commodity the delivery man pointed out.

William's friend gave up in despair (a totally new emotion to him) and went about his deliveries. But several evenings later the driver of the large vehicle to whom he had spoken was waiting for him when he arrived to load his vehicle. He explained to William how he had caused such a stir when he had asked for more thinner, and yet he was finally given some. But he said that when he was given the thinner fifteen or twenty men had come with the fellow he had asked. They all wanted to know who had asked for it.

"And what does he do with this thinner stuff anyhow?"

They threw questions at William's friend from all sides, and he was at a loss to answer them. So he decided to take the thinner and all the questioners to William. They came into William's studio right behind the delivery man who carried the thinner.



When William got the whole group quiet he told them that he would explain what he did if all of them would do the same for him. William went first. He was followed by the delivery man who was followed by the man who took the supplies to William's friend. And he by the man who loaded the previous man's truck. And he by the man who carried the thinner to him. And he by the man who made the thinner. And he by the man who delivered the pine logs to the factory, and he by the man who cut the pine logs, and he by the man who planted the pine saplings.

All during the explanation there were gasps of wonder from the group. And when the last man had finished speaking there was a dead silence.

Finally William had another idea. He asked how long the group had been doing what they were now doing. The group answered in unison.

"For as long as we can remember."

Then William thought of the most earth-shaking question. But he didn't ask it. He simply told the men that what they were doing was important. He pointed out that each of them had a job that was vital to his work as an artist. And he explained that his work was important—in fact, the most important work he had ever heard of. (But then he had only just then discovered that there were other kinds of work to be done.)

William convinced the men and then sent them back to their jobs. But as soon as they had gone his mind began to run wild. He thought that if he could get more thinner just by asking, he might get more canvas, or more food, or clothes. And so our artist stayed up one night and met the fellow who delivered the food. And this time William gave this fellow full instructions—the questions he was supposed to ask and that he was supposed to bring to the studio all the people who worked along the line by which food came to William. When his instructions had been carried out, William asked the group

the same questions he had asked the previous group, and then told them how important his work was and sent them back to their jobs.

He repeated the process with the man who delivered his clothes, and the fellow who painted the building and the fellow who washed the windows—until William realized what a large world he lived in.

But his knowledge of the world really began when he discovered books. When he was talking to one group, the tailors I believe, he had been told that the plans or designs came from a *book*. William, of course, had no idea what a book was, but he traced it down and found it came from a building marked L-I-B-R-A-R-Y. William had gone in—by now he was taking trips to all corners of his newly discovered world—and had spoken to the fellow behind the desk and asked for a *book*.

"Where's your call slip?" answered the clerk. "Read the directions on the card over there and fill out one of those slips," William was told.

He couldn't make any sense out of written instructions so he watched over the shoulder of a man who was filling out one of the things the clerk had called *call slips*. The man had a box of cards in front of him and there were numbers and words on the cards and the man copied the numbers and words on the *call slip*. When the man had gone to give the slip to the clerk, William looked at the box and discovered that each of the cards in it was different. So he picked one at random and copied it and presented the slip to the clerk. He had noticed that the man ahead of him had taken the book he got from the clerk to a table near by and was reading it earnestly. William did the same when the clerk returned. Of course his reading was slow at first because he had never read anything but labels before, but as the days and books went by he began to understand more and more what was on the page before him. And he spent weeks and weeks at his reading. And of course he had to read at

random. He would go to the boxes of cards and pull one out and pick out a card in it and copy it. These reading habits didn't make him an expert in any one field but it made him realize the many possibilities how one can live—or to use the expression he found in one of the really old books he read: how one can "enjoy" oneself. William had never known that enjoyment existed, let alone how one achieved it.

After many weeks of such reading William asked the fellow next to him what he thought of the world. "What world?" asked the man. "The world we live in," replied William.

The man replied that the library was fine.

"Is this all you know of it?" asked William, almost dumbfounded.

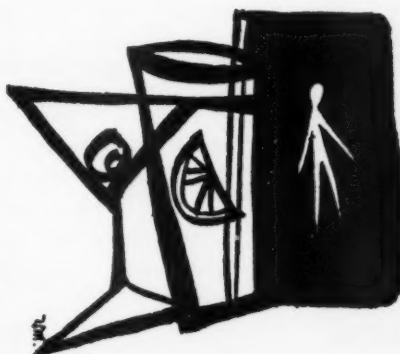
"There's more?" asked the man.

"Don't you learn about the world in the books you read?" asked William.

"But that's only in books," replied the man.

Suddenly William realized that he was probably the only man who knew that the world existed.

One day not too long after this William's friends began to hear strange sounds coming from William's studio. As the days passed the sounds grew louder and more and more people came and went. (And they didn't look like artists.) Of course, William's friends didn't know it, but the sounds were music from William's stereo hi-fi, the giggles of girls, and the tinkle of glasses, and the sharp voice of William giving orders to the people who came and went.



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"this always seemed an appropriate
introduction to my prints"

ARTIST: ROBERT HODGELL

COMPILED BY MARGARET RIGG

"I was born in Mankato, Kansas, in 1922. Parents were schoolteachers, father turned school administrator and last year was ordained a Methodist minister. I enrolled in children's art classes at Washburn College. In high school interests switched to track and editing the yearbook, graduated in 1940. Met John Stuart Curry that summer and assisted him on the murals he was doing for the Kansas State Capitol. Emigrated to University of Wisconsin that fall, enrolled, continued as Curry's mural and studio assistant. Majored in art and track (Big Ten high jump champion), school yearbook and Wesley Foundation. Came the war. Navy trainee—Wisconsin, Dartmouth College, Columbia Midshipman's School, Skipper of LCT in the Gilberts, LSM engineering officer in the Philippines.

"Back to Wisconsin, Curry, track, Wesley (student). Got married and a Master's degree, freelanced as artist for a year. Went to Des Moines Art Center as instructor and resident artist, three years. Divorced, and went to Mexico to paint and study. University of Illinois graduate schoolteaching and chief illustrator for "Our Wonderful World" encyclopedias for three years. Then, more free-lancing art in Urbana, Illinois. Married and widowed. Become art director, University of Wisconsin at Madison for their Editorial and Communications Services, Extension division. Have illustrated four children's books (working on a fifth), illustrated articles and stories in *Playboy* and other magazines, have been exhibiting prints and paintings for almost twenty-five years now, had over twenty one-man shows. Work is in the Library of Congress, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Des Moines Art Center, Mid-America Art Association, Joslyn Art Museum, Wisconsin Union, Kansas State College, Kansas State Teacher's College, and others."

ROBERT HODGELL





JOB

SIXTEEN years ago, when Robert Hodgell began sending art work to *motive*, the state of Protestant art was marked by the pallor of death. Church magazines presented readers with page upon page of dreary, unrelieved type; it was a kind of idolatry of words. But already there were stirrings among artists and signs of a deep-rooted reawakening to Christian iconography, and most of all, to the universal symbol of the broken Christ in a broken world.

Artists had begun taking the gospel seriously. They applied its message to the disruptions of our times, and the gospel even got to be uncomfortably close.

This turning of artists from secular themes to Christian themes was taken by *motive* as a significant indication of the new role that the visual arts would assume in the communication of the gospel. Though *motive* never intended to be an arts digest, it very much intended to take the arts seriously.

With the dialogue between the church and the artist begun, amazing things have been attempted. Job is no longer the forgotten little man sunken in ancient history, he is a vital symbol of man's relationship to God. Two decades ago who would have conceived of J.B.?

Bob Hodgell also brings the great biblical events close to us, sometimes so close that the figure of Christ offends. We are disturbed by the unexpected appearance, by an almost seedy figure—because we still resist growth beyond the "sweet and friendly" Jesus-image which Sunday school taught us. Yet harsh reality makes this image strangely irrelevant; comforting perhaps, but removed from the struggles and tensions of our life. More deeply comforting is the real Christ who comes into the very midst of our problems. (And passes among us unrecognized because we expected the bearded matinee idol.)

Hodgell's series on Christ gets to the point at once. There is no dillydallying around about prettiness or sweetness. There is none of the irrelevant concern over "effects" nor idealization of the face and figure. Christ does not need idealizing. These prints reveal *what happens* when Christ appears among us; what happened once in history occurs over and over again in every age since men continue to reject and despise Christ.

But Hodgell has not only revealed a biblical Christ; he presents a personal witness. How did he come to do these prints? He tells his own story well:

"Concerning the print series on the passion and death of Christ, it dates from a talk I had to give one Easter season when I was at the Des Moines Art Center. I did a series of seven drawings on large sheets of illustration board, in one evening, as I recall. They got me through the talk, but I couldn't get away from these
(Continued on page 19)

PRINTS ON THE PASSION AND DEATH OF CHRIST



THE SUPPER



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THE BETRAYAL



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drawings. They may have been done ten years ago now, but in spite of revising and reworking efforts preliminary to cutting each wood block neither the composition nor the concept has changed greatly. Five blocks have been done now. I'm debating the final two and it's quite possible I will add two more. The last four blocks have been cut in the last two years. Whether the church finds them acceptable doesn't matter too much. The doing of them has become more important to me than any use they might have."

"I've never really tried to justify or explain the apparent contrasts between the earlier concept of Christ and the more recent Christ-image, mainly because such contrasts are not strange to me. I am as apt to work in one style as the other, and while my prints may suggest a particular style it is because it is appropriate to the medium."

The block medium demands a ruggedness,

an expressionistic quality of line and form, a merging of distortion and exaggeration with flow of space and form that is unnecessary in direct painting.

"In the 1943 *Head of Christ* I was trying to combat certain trends which I felt to be unworthy. I tried to establish an image which I felt was valid.

In my print series I've been trying to develop a language of symbols, a sort of expressionism, I think. Faces, hands, drapes, attitudes, are treated not as people or things or places but as *visual experiences* which can arouse or convey meanings directly. So I try to restrict a figure to an expression or gesture, using faces and hands more as a dancer might.

"I don't want my viewer to look at people, but to *participate in the experience*. I've tried to do a portrait of an *EVENT* and in doing so the symbols most likely to be understood are the basis of the visual language."

THE DENIAL





GOLGOTHA





WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY



PILGRIM BEGINS HIS JOURNEY



HEAD OF CHRIST, INK DRAWING, 1943

WHEN Bob was commissioned by *motive* in 1943 to do a *Head of Christ* he traced every reference he could find which might have historical reason for suggesting how Christ might actually have looked. In Bob's words, "The only conclusion I could come to was that each historical image was based in the culture which produced it with little or no reference to 'facts.' Then I wrote to a number of friends and asked for a description of the image that was real to *them*. These inquiries were fascinating but only served to free me from any particular concept—either historical or contemporary-commercial. So I set about building an image that included as many of the qualities that were important to me as I could.

"The other side of my effort concerned the bearded lady concept that made up most of the contemporary-commercial versions of Christ. It seemed to me (being a crew-cut sailor at the time) that most people these days are so unfamiliar with the look of bearded men that an artist could dress any soft nonsubstance with a beard and have it accepted—hence the 'bearded ladies.' I wanted a young Christ, a strong concept, and an image that could be recognized without resorting to the standard camouflage/symbolism. Whether or not the image succeeded is still being judged. (When I voice this argument from behind my own red beard, it doesn't seem to sound quite right!)"

I HAVE RELAPSES, OF COURSE, but art is still basically a sense of calling. When I was a Navy trainee I applied for transfer to the chaplaincy services. I was rejected; they had more interest in a quick supply of deck officers. But more significant to me Harold Ehrensperger, then editor of *motive*, also advised against my going into professional church work. His advice puzzled me at the time, but I'm growing to appreciate the wisdom of it."

"I met John Stuart Curry the summer I graduated from high school. He was painting murals in the Kansas State Capitol building and took
(Continued on page 26)



THE PRODIGAL

me on as an apprentice the same day I met him. I worked with him the remaining six years of his life as an apprentice (with time out for the Navy).

"Curry was probably one of the three best-known painters in America at that time, although current art histories seldom grant him more than a grudging line—equating 'regionalism' with 'provincialism' which everyone *knows* is *bad*! Curry had only one dictum: '*paint what you know*.' He was a farm boy who was an artist and never claimed to be anything more in spite of his wife's efforts to make him a 'spearhead of culture.' Future generations will think better of Curry because the man and the artist were the same."

"Opinion has often been expressed, without discernible objection, that there is no longer such a critter as the professional artist. I don't know. It's possible that educational institutions are incapable of producing professionals.

"I'll vote for the old apprentice system. And, I would like nothing better than to be able to make my living as an artist, 'a workman unashamed.'"

ONE factor evident in Bob's work is its relationship to Negro spirituals. Bob has collected records of spirituals for years and has had a long interest in folk music. The feeling of the old spirituals is achieved visually in many of his prints. One print which is obviously and directly motivated by a particular Negro spiritual is, of course, *Ole Ark's A'Moverin* (December, 1958, inside back cover). Noah's plight is presented with a depth of humor which draws laughter from the onlooker immediately. It is the rich and deep humor of participation and empathy. This edge of humor felt in so many of Hodgell's prints is akin to the free-association creativity of the recent Picasso sculptures. A refreshing, almost primitive humor which is profound, immediate, moving.

IT is this dimension of humor in Hodgell's work which perhaps communicates with the public most readily. In talking with Bob one is

most impressed by his desire to communicate. His great goal is to get the idea *across*. Yet he does not sacrifice his convictions and ideas to the communication—it is not "communion at any cost." His prints are thus not slickly commercial poster art. Many people react with horror at his concept of Christ and the disciples but at the same time they can laugh at the grotesquely humorous figure of *The Prodigal*. *Pilgrim* is "understood" and so is the distorted figure of Judas in *The Betrayal* but the face he gives Jesus seems an affront. Some reactions are so strong that people have openly attacked Bob as "unchristian," saying "that picture is an insult to my Christ. This may be your Jesus but it is not mine." And again, "That is no picture of Christ; it looks more like some criminal. I think an apology should be made for such a picture."

In spite of various bitter or enthusiastic responses Bob continues, in his own way, to communicate the gospel visually.

"I've known so many young artists struggling for a personally identifiable style that I often wonder about my own lack of concern for it. I think it's because I'm less interested in a personal identity than in *communication*."

"I can get excited by color and paint textures and pattern like any other aesthetically trained organism. But these things in themselves simply aren't important enough for me to devote my life to them. If my ideas are corny it is because I'm not especially trained or profound as a thinker. But I still feel that it's ideas that must be communicated, because they are more important and worth communicating than sensations of color, texture, pattern, etc. While these latter can be frivolous as ends they can be powerful as means of communication."

"To be idea-oriented rather than style-oriented is not commercially sound nor acceptable by contemporary aesthetic standards. (I had a visit the other night from a friend and he said he hoped I wasn't still doing those 'awful religious satires'.) I think I'm as aware of 'contem-

porary' styles and trends as the next man, but in most of my work I am experimenting with finding better and more effective *ways of presentation*. However, I have a strong conviction that style and medium are the *vehicles* for the presentation of ideas—not the reverse. I have much to learn from experiment and accident, but in good conscience I cannot make these my objective."

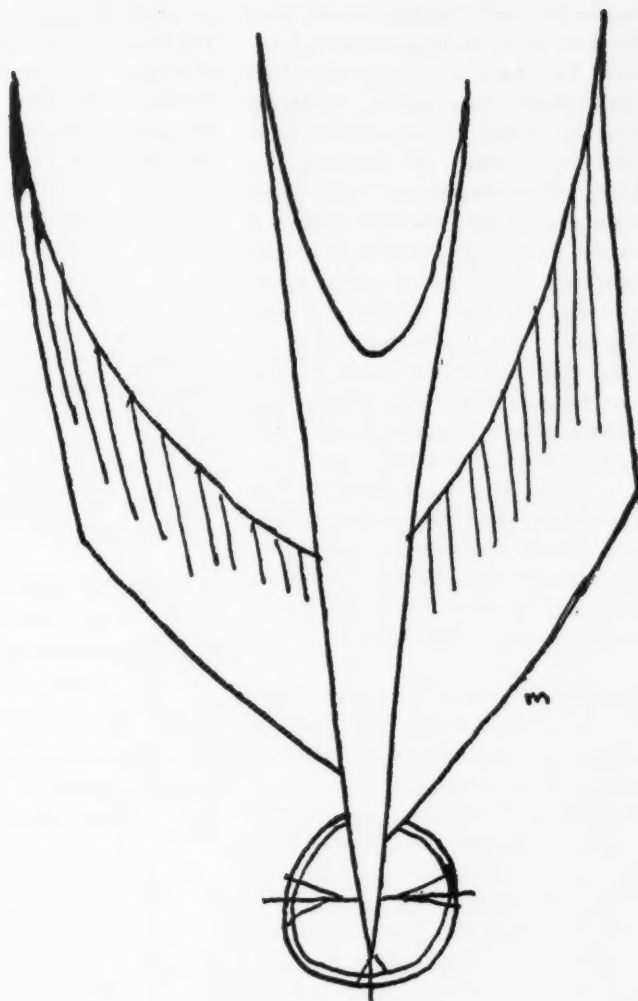
There may be no real limit to man's ability for self-excitation, yet I question his assumption of unlimited creativeness. I cannot face a blank canvas with a blank mind. When I doodle creatively I know that they are still only doodles no matter who might find them profound. To me there is something sacrilegious to the claims of creativity I've heard voiced by so many artists in recent years. It may be fun and pseudo-profound to play Little God, but is art self-therapy? It is, of course. But beyond the clinical and educational value of this concept, I can't help feeling that the traditional concept of art conveyed a great deal more. Self-expression was the inevitable evidence of individual uniqueness which came through and sometimes dominated what was, nevertheless, an attempt by the artist to communicate (to inform, chastise, entertain). This attitude is personal, but he shares these feelings with Ben Shahn and Jack Levine, great artists of similar conviction and philosophy.

"I'm in sympathy with Shahn's insistence that art is communication and that self-expression must assume an audience else why exist. At the other end is the attitude I heard expressed by Adolph Gottlieb and other artists on a panel here a few weeks ago—'the public be damned' and other words to that effect. I do believe that the so-called contemporary trends have freed the artist of slavery to appearance and allowed him to pursue the image—has released him from the obligation of imitation that he may find a means of direct visual communication."

Bob Hodgell's work strives for the communication of truth, and that is the religious function of art.

what world is this ?

BY ERNEST L. SNODGRASS



IMAGINATIVE WRITERS OFTEN deal with the education of youth. The novel of education is a recognized *genre* in literature. College, however, is seldom presented in the books as an educationally significant experience. The novels tell how young men encounter new aspects of reality, how they arrive at their own interpretation of what they confront, and how they then begin to respond through their new insights. Curiously, this educational process is presented in about every possible way except as the work of an educational institution.

Instead of going to college, the characters go off to a far country and spend their substance in riotous living, as in the New Testament parable; or they sign on a ship and go to

sea, as in Conrad's *Lord Jim* and Melville's *Billy Budd*; or they get involved in their home situation, like *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. Others have been presented as learning in the army: *The Young Lions*, as in Irwin Shaw, learn *The Red Badge of Courage*, as in Stephen Crane, or *A Farewell to Arms*, as in Ernest Hemingway. One, Hans Castorp in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, achieves insight and decision in a tuberculosis sanatorium.

In Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov is a university student, but what he learned at college was obviously not what he required to know. The same is true of Balzac's young Eugene Rastignac, in *Pere Goriot*. Although a student, Eugene's vital learning took place

wholly off-campus—at Parisian society balls.

There are many stories with a campus background. They tell about college students, but they are not novels of college education. They show rather the reverse of education. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, by J. D. Salinger, young Holden Caulfield's schoolmates are so shameless, and the professors and other adults are so stupid, that he, their sensitive victim, winds up in a mental hospital. Even greater destruction comes to Miss Payton Loftis in William Styron's *Lie Down in Darkness*. College would seem to be not only lacking in educational validity but also threateningly destructive to those who dare enroll.

When the novels with a campus

locale deal with faculty people, they tend similarly to suggest antieducation. The faculty persons are often disreputable—and worse. *We Happy Few*, by Helen Howe, shows their triviality; *Groves of Academe*, by Mary McCarthy, shows their snobishness. Stringfellow Barr depicts a varied faculty immorality in *Purely Academic*, and a novel called *Swanson*, by Timothy Pember, shows how disloyal a faculty can be when risks to their status occur. There have been several books telling how faculty people squirm when McCarthyism threatens them, and there is a recent one, not a novel, called *Some of My Best Friends Are Professors* which emphasizes the anti-intellectual complacency, pretension, and opportunism to be found among the title characters.

PROBABLY one reason why imaginative writers do not present college work as educationally significant is that college learning is too complex to focus and contain in artistic limitations. Books about college people meeting and dealing with each other on a campus are really not books about an educational institution. Characters can be made to confront each other and go through engaging episodes against any background. But the primary fact of college life is not personal association or dramatic events of human action. These happen at colleges, but nobody is invited to join a faculty primarily because of his gifts in relating himself to others, and no student is rightly enrolled in college mainly in the interest of social acquaintance. These are important at any time, but at college they are called extracurricular. The novel of college education would have to center on intellectual content, on the curriculum.

College education is teachers and students meeting at the content studied. How could this be adequately focused in a novel or dramatized in a play? The words for this basic reality in college experience are dull—*curriculum, courses, studies,*

or, most incredible, so many *hours*. Yet these words represent the world as known, or as approached, by the minds of men. They gather up man's discoveries, his insights, his struggles, and his creations in dealing with reality. How could this be framed, or the impact it makes on a student be expressed? The more specific area names may seem similarly tedious—astronomy, biology, chemistry, economics, fine arts, geology, history, language, literature, mathematics, music, philosophy, physics, political science, psychology, religion, sociology. Nevertheless, these are the rubric of a college—the red-letter points of college learning.

STUDENTS come to college with the world they then know: its nature, its values, its familiar standards and hopes. If the work of the college is accomplished, what Thomas Wolfe remarks about Eugene Gant after he had gone to Harvard applies—*You Can't Go Home Again*. New worlds appear, the

worlds of the curriculum are experienced, and the student's orbit expands. He can never restrict himself again to the smaller circle.

This experience is brought out in all the classic novels of education. The *hero-learner* always encounters a new world, or a new aspect of himself, in the far country, or on the ship at sea, or in his family, or at the wars. Questions result, sometimes with a driving curiosity, often with bewilderment and even pain. The experience of college education is the same. A student recently wrote a paper on Thoreau, and he said: "A man will seek knowledge for his problems, but he will not seek problems for his knowledge." One can only reply: But where do problems come from? Do they formulate themselves out of nothing? Curricular education is precisely an encounter with new knowledge which leads to problems. College work is not the knowledge of answers. It is new insights regarding the world—insights requiring new interpretation and decision.



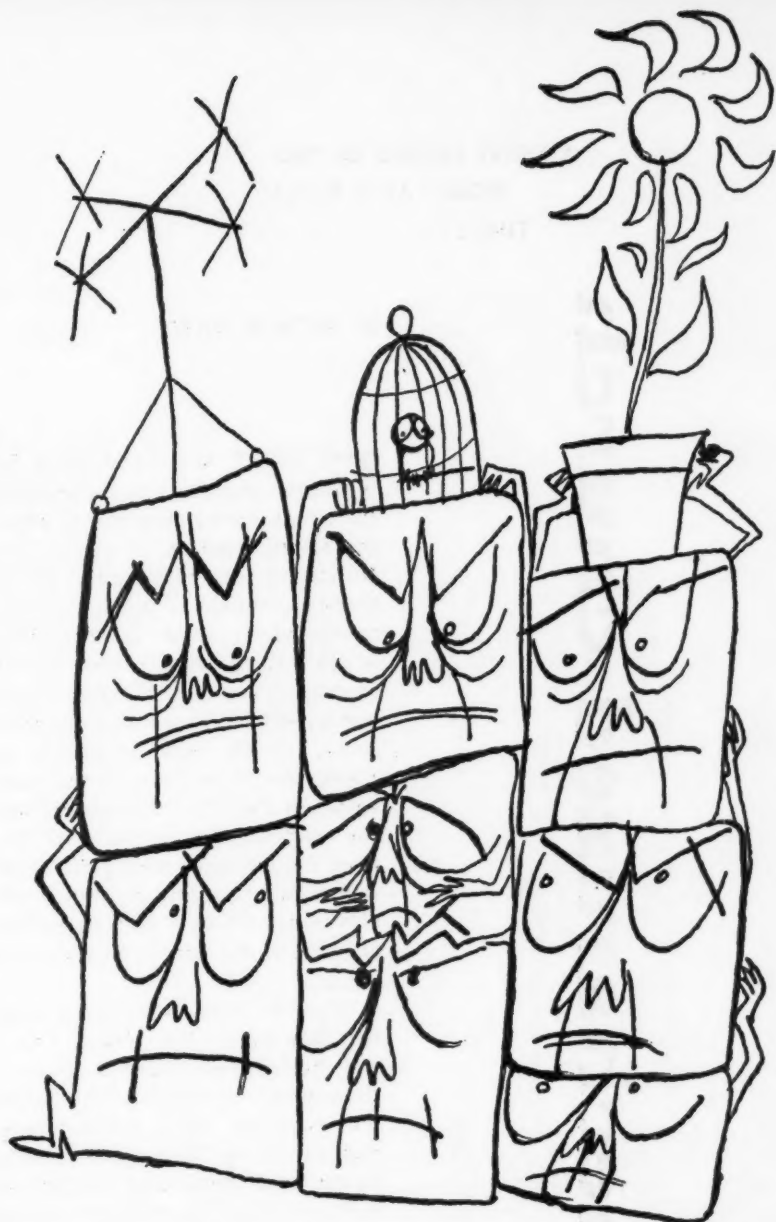
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College education thus becomes the creative act of the learner. Good teachers, like competent musicians, trust the scores before them and strive to present the material as they see it. The student's encounter with these new worlds, the resulting problems which engage him, and the new insights come from the outpouring of his own directed energy. He composes his new world to embrace this widening scope.

Rebecca West, writing of art, describes college work at the same time when she says that "it must change the aspect of reality, for it is an experience . . . which breaks up the present as we know it, transforming it into the past and giving us a new present." Only the creative student can receive this education. In May, 1959, a Jupiter missile was shot into space at Cape Canaveral, and the nose cone, containing two monkeys, was recovered with the monkeys still alive. This was not a new experience for Able and Baker. To them the cone was just another cage. They raised no questions, gained no insights, and they are now notations in the space-studies curriculum. They became data for learners to encounter and compose in a widened view of reality, a new present.

The enemy of a person's education is the familiar, the humdrum world of yesterday and the day before. Except in education, that is what we cling to, desiring to encounter no new data and turning away from the necessity for new insights. Learning is the art of grasping new awarenesses and developing style in dealing with them. We sometimes ask each other, "How's the world treating you?" A more appropriate question on a campus would be, "How are you coming along with your treatment of the world? What is now being realized, and perhaps tentatively composed?"

CURRICULAR encounter, and a reordering of the world to a new creation—this is the work of college education. No one can create from nothing, but the curriculum gives



WHAT MORE COULD YOU WANT? YOU'RE SERVING THE SYSTEM

the materials. From these the student composes the world that progressively exists for him. It becomes his new creation. Scholars explain that in Bible times some people expected an end of their present world and the beginning of a new order. Of course this eschatological expectation did not materialize. But is not education a continuing eschatological awareness, a time of crisis, of *kairos*, as the Bible says, charged with responsibility and fate? Doesn't

every student come to say, as the result of his studies, "Old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new"?

Perhaps no novelist will ever bring this experience of college education imaginatively to pass. But there must be thousands who remember, and other thousands who now know and will recall, that this is the ground, and the basic reality, of their college years.

the first mechanized church

A SHORT RECORD OF THIS
WORLD AT A FUTURE
TIME . . .

BY MICHAEL DAVES

THE FIRST MECHANIZED Church stood as a guardian above the city, a giant among giants, a center among centers. A magnificent edifice, it was constructed in the shape of a missile. The structure was composed of thick colored glass, which distinguished it from the surrounding aluminum buildings. Services were held in the nose-cone sanctuary, which was accessible by taking one of several supersonic elevators in the lobby. The church was the religious arm of the state, and gave the citizenry a religious motivation for supporting the state's policies. First Church had been constructed in the Year of Our Machine 2000.

Machine worship had been in effect long before the construction of the mechanized churches. Back in the ancient days during Christianity, the Machine had revolutionized man's thinking. Man was intoxicated by his intelligence and held in awe by his creation. The complete change came slowly. Many still clung to Christianity, but they were ignored in the face of the Machine's mighty power. Increasing numbers placed their faith and confidence, not in the Christian God, but in man's inventions. Soon, Christianity died, not from persecutions, but from lack of interest. It was a simple operation for the ritual of Christianity to be altered, and for the Machine to replace the Christian God.

The devout streamed by the hundreds into the lobby of First Church, climbed into the elevators and made the five-second ascent to the nose-cone sanctuary. Their faces were a study in anticipation: wide eyes, wet

lips and pallid complexion. They were breathing rapidly and their movements were jerky as they made their way from the elevators. After arriving in the nose cone, they stepped onto conveyor belts which took them to empty seats. They immediately reclined on the soft foam rubber and joined with their brothers in "The Moments of Silent Mechanization," the part of the worship service designed to enable the worshiper to think of his importance to Our Machine. For an instant, everyone from the scientist to the sanitation officer felt equal in his contribution to the Almighty.

A soft turbine hum signaled that it was 2300, and time for the services to begin. The congregation stood at attention and saluted as the chief scientist and choir entered. Then they picked up their hymnals and began singing:

*Come, Thou Almighty Machine,
Help us thy name to sing,
Help us to praise! . . .*

The conveyor belt faithfully transported the worship personnel to the vicinity of the High Altar, upon which was a huge replica of an atom structure. As they passed it, they bowed piously. The worship personnel were dressed the same as the congregation—in durable white plastic suits, insulated, of course, from radiation. The choir sat at an angle, facing the High Altar, while the Chief Scientist took his place directly underneath the atom structure. He intoned solemnly, "Let us pray."

Sitting down, the congregation turned to the prayer section of the hymnal and joined the Chief Scientist in prayer:

Almighty and most merciful Machine, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost tools. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own blueprints. We have offended against thy holy inventions. We have left unbolted those things which we ought to have bolted and we have bolted those things which we ought to have left

unbolted, and our gears no longer properly mesh. . . .

A pitiful wail arose from the congregation at the thought of their transgressions, and did not subside until after the Chief Scientist assured them that they would not be destroyed by radioactive fallout.

AFTER much wailing, the congregation prepared themselves for the sermon by clamping on earphones, which were provided at every seat. Writing out a sermon topic which they wanted to hear, they placed it in a slot on the arm of the seat. These topics, in turn, would be transmitted to a huge electronic brain located underneath the sanctuary. Shortly, the appropriate sermon would be piped back to the individual worshiper who, comfortably reclining in his foam-rubber seat, felt more than heard the message. Most of the requested sermons were the same every week. The list of topics included, "Peace, Prosperity, and Atomic Power," "Salvation and Automation," "How to Be Happy in Your Leisure," and "Christianity and Other Superstitions." Such sermons as these streamed through the earphones:

"Rejoice, for ye have found salvation in automation. Today, ye can have all the modern conveniences that you desire. Our Mighty Machine has enabled us to work less and make more money and be happier.

"Thanks be unto the Machine who gives us the victory! Our enemies have been vanquished by the power of the atom. Their cities have been destroyed, their helpless women and children slain, their war-producing factories left in shambles. Never will they rise again. Never will another force—from this planet or another—ever dare attack us because of our technocracy. All of us must work together for Our Machine. . . .

"Christianity was a stupid superstition that claimed an ancient tribal god had domain over man and the Machine. Its adherents suggested loyalties to the 'unseen' and the

November 1959



IT'S A MATTER OF TASTE AFTER ALL, AND YOURS IS OLD FASHIONED—

'eternal.' How utterly ridiculous! Look around you. You can see the realities. The unseen is nonexistent, and the seen is the eternal. Bow down before the bigness of Our Machine! Prostrate yourselves before the power of Our Machine! Be mindful of the benefits of Our Machine! Praise be for protection, prosperity, peace, plenty and power! It is the Machine's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes. . . ."

With the conclusion of the sermons, the congregation stood once again. This time they repeated the Affirmation of Faith:

I believe in the Almighty Machine, Benefactor of heaven and earth who was conceived by the Savior Science, born in the minds of men, and will triumph over all our enemies.

I believe in the atomic energy, continued progress, the communion of the Scientists, the forgiveness of fuel-line failures, bigger and better inventions and security everlasting. Amen.

All remained standing as the choir sang a doxology.

*Praise Him from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all workers here below.
Praise the Machine, ye Scientists,
Praise all His wondrous nuclear tests.
Amen.*

During the doxology, a huge screen behind the High Altar came alive with pictures and sounds. Subliminal perception made the experience more thrilling. Roaring across the screen came exciting pictures of progress from the early, puny atomic bomb explosion in the ancient world to present planetary explosions. Exclusive shots of the third world war were flashed, and cries of the dying enemy filled the sanctuary with bloody realism. Finally, the superb skyline of their city was shown, the crowning achievement in comfort.

ALL members of the congregation were in a frenzy. They jumped to their feet and clapped their hands and yelled, "Progress,

PROGRESS, PROGRESS!" They embraced their neighbors and laughed wildly. "Truly Our Machine is a great Machine!" "He will always endure!" "We have come so far!" After several minutes of screaming, laughing, jumping, crying, yelling, shaking, shouting and sighing, the congregation collapsed in their seats, emotionally exhausted. . . .

The soft, muffled sounds of the turbine began the final part of the service. The devout filed toward the High Altar and knelt. Complete reverence was in order. The Chief Scientist walked along the line of kneeling people. They accepted small glasses of water and tranquilizers. After all had been tranquilized, the Chief Scientist stood behind the atom-clustered altar and pronounced a benediction:

And now to the Almighty Machine, praise, oil, and honor be, progress without end; and may the presence of atomic energy light your homes forever. Amen.

The conveyor belts speeded up. The First Mechanized Church was cleared within five minutes.



OUR CHURCH REALLY
DONES'T NEED A
PROPHET, BUT WE COULD
USE YOU ON THE
FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

AMOS CAME

BY ROBERT HAMILTON STEWART

WE ARE NOT FOOLISH enough to believe that Amos was popular. Nor would he be popular today if he were to stand in the midst of the campus. His words would be harsh to our ears and the realities he would lift before us would jangle our already "jangled" nerves.

In Amos' view, the world, and particularly Israel, belonged to the Lord God, and the problem of the day was that there were those who had not lived up to the demands of God. Thus the judgment of God. He was speaking to the "righteous" Jews at the holy place of Bethel—the "religious persons" of Israel. If he were to speak in the midst of the campus today, he would, of course, be speaking to the "righteous" ones, to the "religious" persons of the campus. Assuming that the campus belongs to God, and finding that there are those who have not lived up to the demands of God, he would say, "The Holy Trust has been broken. The campus is not achieving its calling

under God!" Then Amos' voice would rumble out as he stands in mid-campus, Thus saith the Lord,

—for three transgressions, yea even for four, I will not revoke judgment on the beer parties of the campus! For have they not caused innocent feet to stumble? Have they not led people to act even beneath the dignity of a human personality? Have they not increased the already high cost in destruction of property, and cut deep into human heartache?

Then, Amos, facing north, would continue, Thus saith the Lord,

—for three transgressions, yea even for four, I will not revoke judgment of the sororities and fraternities. For have they not forced students to waste hours and hours of valuable time, the one thing unable to be recaptured, time that could well be spent on study? Have they not caused persons to live according to a superficial and unrealistic scale of values? Have they not set person over

against person and rejected and hurt young life so that it remains wounded and mangled? Is there any righteousness there?

Amos would turn to the east and say, Thus saith the Lord,

—for three transgressions, yea even for four, I will not revoke judgment of the faculty. Have they not been callous in their concern for students? Have they not been slothful in their preparation? Have they not caused many young lives to stumble and fall because of the example they failed to set? Have not values of community failed to materialize because they have such a multiplicity of interests and pull?

Then Amos might face the west and say, Thus saith the Lord,

—for three transgressions, yea even for four, I will not revoke judgment of athletics. Has this not caused students and the campus to lavish attention, time, money, and energy on the pe-

riphery of the campus? Has this not caused young life to miss the central purpose of God's calling to the vocation as a student? Can the Lord God accept this in the name of stewardship?

Then, having faced all these directions on campus, Amos would stand before us and face us, "the righteous ones," the religious groups, and his voice would lift—then his piercing words would strike our own "righteous" ears,

Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions, yea even for four, I will not revoke judgment of the religious groups. For have they not been more concerned about their own institutional existence than persons? Is not the human person the pearl of great price? Have they not failed to be dynamic and vital? Are they not content to exist as impotent entities, using up hours of time while most of their adherents sit in the living units laughing at the mention of these artificially centered meetings? Have they not been interested only in hearing themselves talk and ramble through their own dogmas and rituals as if thereby they effectively moved the whole campus religiously?

These are cutting words, sharp-pointed daggerlike digs, at the conscience of each person who has ears to hear. These are words that would fall from the lips of Amos in mid-campus, for in Mid-Campus, U.S.A., we are affecting a very small percentage of the student body, and most of the faculty consider the religious groups a necessary evil or, at best, an extension of the protective arm of parents and home church. Amos has dropped his plumb line into the midst of the campus, and his plumb line compels us to look at three things.

First and most important, we must have a deep concern for persons. Let us not imply that there have not been some leaders who have been concerned about persons—rather, each one of us in each group must have this concern, for as we come to know and understand each of the basic traditions that is

represented on the campus we will see that each has this concern for persons at its heart.

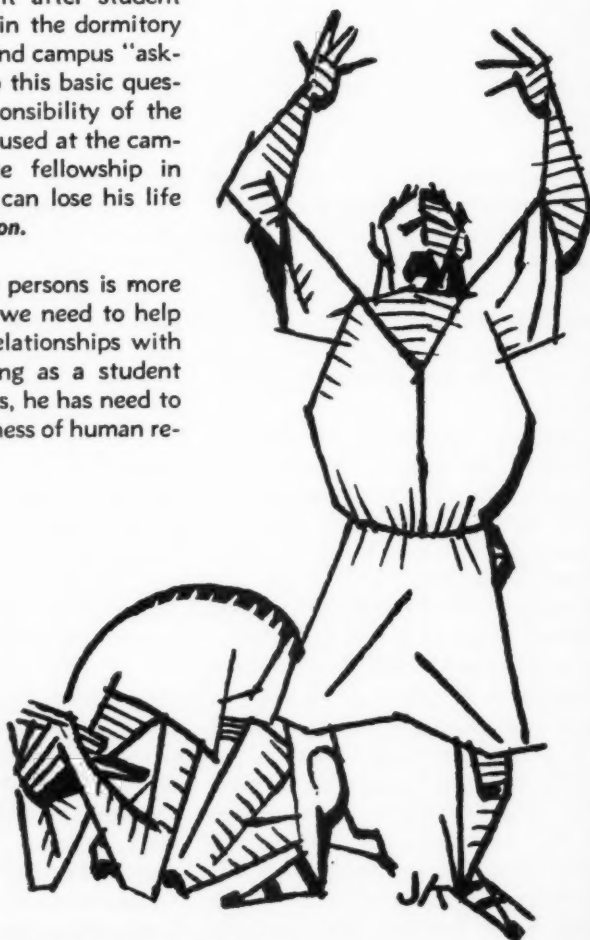
We cannot add students to our lists, rolls, and memberships as if we were collecting scalps and holding them up as trophies to boast about. This concern does not mean a religious front for a collection agency to gain money from more people. This does not mean that we entice students in so that they can add another title to their collection of campus titles or increase their long list of activities. And it certainly does not mean that we use a person for his "status" on campus or his talents only.

As religious groups we need to be concerned about him as a person, to help him work out the number-one problem which gnaws at his life—that of motivation. "Why am I going to college? What is my reason for being?" Student after student sits or lies moping in the dormitory or races wildly around campus "asking" for answers to this basic question. It is the responsibility of the religious groups focused at the campus to provide the fellowship in which the student can lose his life and find his motivation.

IF our concern for persons is more than lip service, we need to help students in their relationships with other persons. Living as a student must live on campus, he has need to understand the fullness of human re-

lationships based on love. He cannot know this until he has experienced love firsthand in a forgiving fellowship. The religious group can be the solid rock in the midst of shifting sands of human relationships because it has within it the power of forgiveness. Our campuses very normally reflect the usual judgments of our culture plus some of its own. If students do not make the social grade, the athletic grade, the academic grade—they fail. One student, though failing by the usual campus standard of judgment, found her way into the forgiving religious group. Through such a group her life turned from the edge of self-destruction to a hope that ultimately led her to Europe and the service of those who could not help themselves as victims of the cold war.

Students are asking the ultimate



PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE

questions of life, and we should stand ready to travel many a devious path to help them. However, we tend to reject these students before we begin the quest with them. We tend to say or give the impression that they are welcome to come and search if they are already "saved." If they have accepted "the creed," or if they don't engage in certain things, then they are "in." Many students who throw verbal rocks at creeds and dogmas are genuinely looking with honesty for the answers to the ultimate questions of life. Others, of course, are showing only their sophistication. Many students who join a beer party are thirsting after the ultimate answer. To such persons we are particularly apt in closing our doors, if not actually by our very superior and "holier-than-thou" attitude. Ours is the responsibility to create an atmosphere into which students can feel at home with their honest questions and where they sense the real thrill of standing on the sharp edge of some genuine answers of life.

The second thing that we see when Amos drops his plumb line in mid-campus is the lack of vital, dynamic, and alive groups. There are theologies in all our traditions that say, in part, "Give the 'true view'—if they don't get it or won't accept it, it's too bad!" But I believe it is essential that we *communicate* with students. This I believe we are not doing on our campuses. For we must deal with the essential questions of life before we will begin to communicate and reach others.

There is the need on campus of trying creative avenues of approach. It may mean that we need a "bread-and-wine mission" on the campus. At least, we may have to try unconventional forms. We do not have to hold on to a form just because it has a glorious past.

It is interesting how easily we become idolatrous. We worship the form and this obscures the very God we would see and have others see. Our secular friends stand off and see our hypocrisy and call our attention to it but we are so much in love with

the form that we cannot allow it to pass away. Each of our traditions has numerous men who have cast off old and out-moded forms, and each time their fellow men have caught a clearer vision of God and his will for their day.

One word of warning. I am not suggesting that we become religious sensationalists nor that we jump to new techniques as the panacea of communication. This would be idolatry also. I am suggesting that we need the best creative student minds. They may need to listen to the mature years of the past but not be enslaved to its methods.

The third thing Amos would point out: Religious groups must be true to their calling. Church groups do not exist for themselves, they exist to undergird and support the campus in its calling under God. No seeking after excellence is going to come until students and faculty are committed to *sacrifice* entailed in study, and to the *service* of mankind. It is the function of the religious groups to fill these words, "sacrifice" and "service," with meaning.

Beyond this, the pursuit of excellence in education cannot take place in a vacuum. It can only take place in a genuine community that is a fellowship of immature and mature persons who are seeking together. Real learning just does not happen without this genuine fellowship. It is the responsibility of the religious groups not to exist as parasites on the campus, but to exist to create community. Yet we are the very ones that help to destroy its existence by the jealousy and marked divisions over which we will not very often venture even for conversation. We remain happy in our own little parasitical groups as appendages to the campus, having the feeling that if the campus would just join "us," we would right all wrongs.

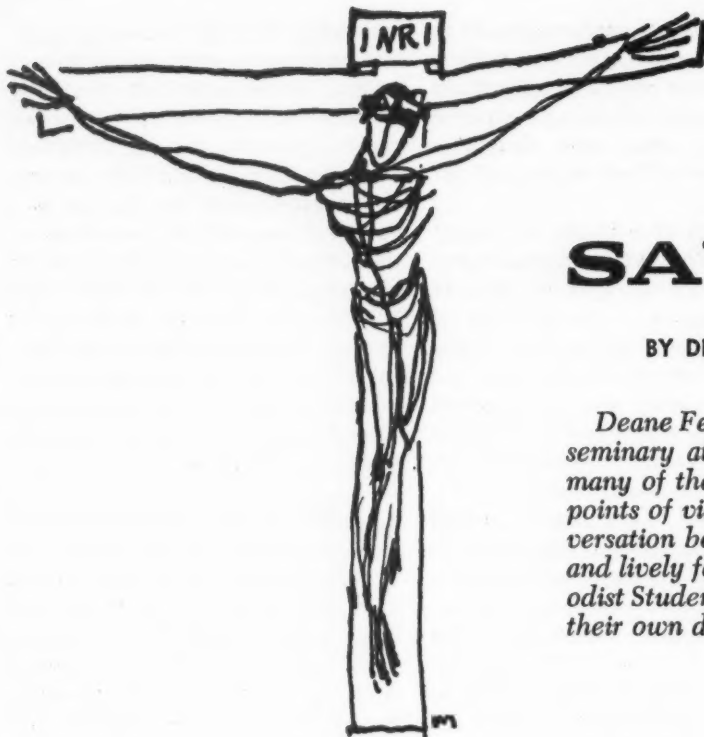
For campus community to begin, we have need to create a *religious community*. This is not one that tries to get everyone to subscribe to "one belief" or to give accent to the

little that we might all agree upon. We need not create a "cut-flower" religion. There needs to be that type of religious community where we come as good Protestants, Catholics, and Jews to share our richness and seek together. It is here that we will have the severest test—to show to the campus that love and forgiveness can jump the barrier of dogmas and beliefs—that love does indeed bind us together at the point of our deepest differences—thus religious community which is in turn vitally concerned about the creation of total campus community.

WHEN these religious differences can encounter each other, not in compromise, but in integrity and love, the academic disciplines will have before them the challenge. Thus, piety will do for learning what it cannot do for itself. The scientist, the philosopher, the engineer will be brought into community of forgiving love. The search for truth will be genuine on the campus under God, and the pursuit of excellence will be real in education.



Courtesy, Catholic Worker



SAYS WHO ?

BY DEANE W. FERM AND WILLIAM E. RHODES

Deane Ferm and Bill Rhodes graduated from the same seminary at the same time, with the same major and many of the same professors—and yet their theological points of view are sharply distinct and different. A conversation between the two was one of the most exciting and lively features at a regional conference of the Methodist Student Movement. For motive readers, they report their own dialogue.

Deane: WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE is the essence of the Christian faith?

Bill: My answer would be the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Deane: What do you mean by that?

Bill: I mean that God has revealed himself in a unique, complete, and once-for-all way in his Son Jesus Christ. There has never been and never will be another divine revelation to compare with this one. Christ is THE EVENT of history around which everything else revolves—especially around whom my faith and the faith of the Church centers.

Deane: You mean, then, that Christ is the sole mediator between man and God—that only through Christ can man be brought into a right relationship with God?

Bill: Yes.

Deane: Isn't this a rather arrogant claim—this exclusiveness?

Bill: I suppose that it may sound that way. And if I have offended you, I am sorry. But if the gospel has offended you, I am glad!

Deane: But this "sole mediator" business seems to me so nar-

row-minded and intolerant.

Bill: Yet this is what God has done! It is his Act on our behalf! It is his full disclosure of himself. It is not our prerogative to judge what God has done, is it? We mustn't make him over into *our* image!

Deane: But I am not convinced that God has done what *you think* he has done!

Bill: Then you are denying the very core of the Christian faith!

Deane: Not as I understand it.

Bill: Well, then, what do you believe is the core of the Christian faith? (You know, Deane, I suspect the word "essence." It might make Christianity into a philosophy just by the choice of words.)

Deane: I appreciate the words of the Apostle Paul: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," but I do not believe that God was *only* in Christ in a significant way. I do not believe that God has left himself without significant witness in any tradition. In my experience Christ is the highest revelation of God, but I don't believe he is or has to be the highest for everybody.

Bill: Could Mohammed be the highest revelation?

Deane: I am sure that he is for most—if not all—Moslems.

Bill: But this is *not* the Christian faith!

Deane: Why not?

Bill: Because it is the Christian faith that a *saving* knowledge of God can be achieved only through a loving relationship with the Living Christ—and not through anyone or anything else.

Deane: Says whom?

Bill: Says God! This might sound presumptuous, but this is the Christian faith.

Deane: Then I disagree with *your* interpretation of what the Christian faith is.

Bill: What you are doing is destroying the *uniqueness* of the Christian faith. What do you believe is distinctive about Christianity that makes it different from other religions?

Deane: I am not interested in the *uniqueness* of the Christian faith—I am interested in its *universality*.

Bill: What do you mean by that?

Deane: When we live in a right relationship with God, we describe this relationship by the

term *love*. The purpose of the Christian faith is to establish this right relationship. When Jesus told us that we should love God and our fellow men, he was not describing an exclusive principle which only Christians possess. He was describing a universal principle which is imbedded in the very heart of the universe. In other words, I don't believe something to be true just because Jesus said it; rather, I believe that Jesus said it because it is true—it is in the very nature of things.

Bill: You don't believe, then, that there is anything really unique about Christ?

Deane: To me Christ is the highest revelation of God that I know. But to stress his uniqueness is to stress his Jewishness—and he was trying to break free from the shackles of his Jewish religion. He was seeking to express the universal truth.

Bill: To me you have perverted the Christian gospel. You have made Jesus into a prophet among many prophets. You have denied the Incarnation—and without the Incarnation Christianity is no longer Christianity.

Deane: I have denied the exclusive, once-for-allness of the Incarnation, but I do believe that God was in Christ in a significant way.

Bill: But Jesus was still just a prophet.

Deane: I don't like the word *just*. I believe that Jesus differs from us in *degree* and not in *kind*. I believe that he was a man who achieved a far closer and more intimate relationship with God than I will ever achieve. You put him up on a pedestal.

Bill: I didn't put Christ up on a pedestal—God did! Or better yet, by choice of metaphors, you have. I see Jesus Christ as the ground of all understanding. He is my internal starting point for all thought, feeling, and action.

Deane: I think that your Christology gets in the way of your theology.

Bill: But one cannot have a prop-

er theology without a proper Christology!

Deane: Here we go again! Why don't we shift the discussion a bit. What is your authority for believing as you do about God and Christ?

Bill: The Bible primarily.

I believe that the Bible is the story of salvation. It is the story of God's deeds in the history of the Jewish people—his "chosen children" (the Old Testament); and it is the story of God's great deed in Jesus Christ, reconciling all of us fully to him when we accept this deed or event (the New Testament). The New Testament is the confession of Christ as *the Son of God*.

Deane: I have no serious objection to that although I would prefer different terminology.

Bill: If you agree with me here, why don't you agree with what I said earlier?

Deane: Let me explain. If we read the Bible "from the inside," we have a record of what the Jewish people believed (Old Testament) and what the early Christians believed (New Testament) were the mighty acts of God in history. This was their faith.

Bill: And it is our faith, too.

Deane: But this is my problem. *Must it be our faith, too?*

Bill: Yes. Otherwise, the Bible has lost its point. It is our claim also that God has revealed himself in the events of Jewish history and in THE EVENT of Christ. The Bible testifies to this. This is why the Bible is our authority.

Deane: Once again I think that you are stressing the particularity rather than the universality of the Bible.

Bill: . . . and you mean by that?

Deane: I believe—as we agreed at the outset—that man's highest goal in life is to live in a right relationship with God. This relationship we describe by the word *love*. When we are in a false relationship with God, we are sinning. This is the real meaning of sin, i.e., the rupture of the right relationship with him. Only God and man together can heal

this breach—it takes two to make a relationship. Through forgiveness, then, man can be reconciled to God.

Bill: I would have no objection to this. This is good biblical teaching if you understand that Jesus Christ is God.

Deane: Careful now! You slipped this last phrase in on me, and we have already disagreed on that. Now, agreed that this is good biblical teaching. Is it not also good teaching *from our own human experience?* The Bible teaches universal truths—love, sin, forgiveness, reconciliation—these truths are imbedded in human experience. But you feel that God has revealed these truths only in a unique way through the Jewish people and particularly through Christ.

Bill: Yes I do. You are making the Bible into a fine book along with other fine books. But this is not the Christian faith. The Bible is unique—it is a special setting for God's full revelation of himself—it is his story.

Deane: We have the same difference here as we did with Christ. You stress the uniqueness, and I stress the universality.

Bill: O.K. The Bible is a unique authority for believing as I do about God and Christ. What is your authority?

Deane: Human experience.

Bill: That's vague enough. What do you mean?

Deane: By human experience I mean a person's entire conscious life. I mean everything that impinges upon a person's life. This would include his relationship with other people, with himself, with God, with nature, with his studies—in fact, with everything. It would include the Bible, but the Bible would not be in a special category. The Bible would be one of many areas of human experience.

Bill: And you come to believe in God and in Christ on the basis of your *own* personal experience?

Deane: Yes.

Bill: How?

Deane: I indicated earlier that I have found the great doctrines of the Christian faith—love, sin, forgiveness, reconciliation—imbedded in my own experience. The Christian faith makes sense to me because it makes sense with my life. My belief in God has developed in the same way. There is personality in man. There is design in the universe. This world is dependable. It seems to support human values. And so on.

Bill: You have more faith in human experience than I do.

Deane: How so?

Bill: There are many people for whom the ugliness and evil in the world are dominant. This business of love being dominant in their lives would be just nonsense to them.

Deane: I do not deny the reality of evil and ugliness in this world. It is here. The problem of evil is a tough one—but I would gather that it is equally tough for you.

Bill: Yes. That topic would take another dialogue and then some! But I still think that sheer human experience is a mighty shaky authority. Many people, on the basis of their

own experience, come to totally different conclusions than you do about Christ and God.

Deane: This is true. Each person has to speak out of his own experience. And it is our responsibility to help these people develop more meaningful and healthy attitudes. What is the alternative to this? Is it to hang on to some external revelation-claim such as you do? Is it to deny the importance of experience?

Bill: My answer to both questions would be no. One does not "hang on" to an external revelation claim. This is a gross misinterpretation of my position. I believe that God was in Christ in a unique and once-for-all way . . . here was God become man for our sakes. I believe this very much on the authority of the Bible. If you want me to *prove* this, I cannot do so, any more than you can prove your position. In the final analysis all that I can do is to confess the gospel. I do not try to argue *to* it—such as you seem to do. Rather, I testify *from* it. Mine is a faith seeking an understanding.

In response to your second question, I believe that experiencing the truth of the

Christian revelation is of utmost importance. Our faith must be experienced! I, too, appeal to experience! But one does not begin with human experience and proceed to the gospel. It is the other way around. One begins with the experienced and unique disclosure of God in Christ according to Scripture and seeks to work out that revelation in practical affairs, personal habits, and, as in this case, in theological conversation.

Deane: You believe, then, that one learns about God only through the experienced Christ—and this comes initially through the Bible which testifies authoritatively to Jesus as the Christ?

Bill: Yes. And you believe that one learns about God through personal experience from many possible sources and that you have a high regard for Christ and the Bible because their teachings confirm your own experience.

Deane: Yes, you are aware, of course, that the New Testament was not finally canonized until the sixteenth century—that there were many other books that almost made the grade. What makes you so certain that the Holy Spirit has revealed himself in a unique way only through the sixty-six books of the Protestant Bible? Why not add a few more books like the Roman Catholics do? Or, how could God add another book if he wanted to to your closed canon?

Bill: If you want proof that the Holy Spirit confined himself in a unique way to these sixty-six books, I cannot give it to you. I go along with the experience of the Protestant churches on this matter. These books testify to the claim that Jesus is the Christ. That's the main point. And I think that I could show historical and theological reasons for exclusion of the proposed editions. But this dialogue hardly gives us time for a whole course in the history of Christian doctrine!

Deane: What if God wanted to add another book to this canon?



I'M A LITERALIST MYSELF

Bill: This is a hypothetical question.

Deane: No, it isn't. I live in a part of the country where there are a lot of Mormons. They claim that the Book of Mormon is a further revelation of God.

Bill: Naturally, I hold that they are wrong.

Deane: How do you know that?

Bill: The same way in which I know that the Moslems are wrong in accepting the Koran.

Deane: And what way is that?

Bill: Once again I can only confess the warmly felt orthodox Christian conviction that Jesus is the Christ—the final revelation of God. If Christ is the ultimate revelation, then the Koran is clearly a false revelation. And the Book of Mormon is an inadequate one—like all the rest of highly literalistic interpretations of God's truth which confuse words with the Word which is Jesus Christ.

Deane: Says you!

Bill: No. Says God! This might sound arrogant. I intend no arrogance. But I can only confess the gospel. Do you accept the Book of Mormon as a revelation from God?

Deane: I believe that any person or any book or any thing that testifies to God as loving and gracious and forgiving and so on is a revelation of God. This would include the Book of Mormon.

Bill: And here again you are putting your universals of love and forgiveness above the experienced Christ uniquely described by Scripture. I think you've simply put a halo on the virtues of our culture and I think you're wrong.

Deane: There's your "uniqueness" showing up again!

Bill: This brings up the problem of the relationship of Christianity to the other religions of the world. I think that it is obvious what your attitude would be, but why don't you state it?

Deane: I believe that the divine light shines in all traditions. I cannot conceive how a God of love would reveal himself in a unique and saving way

through only one historical people anymore than would a loving human father reveal his love in a unique way only through one of his children. God's love is available to all people. His love is taught in all major living religions. To be sure there are differences in the various religions; we have different traditions; different folk lore, different ways of expressing ourselves. But basically our goal is the same—a right relationship with God. The attitude of the Christian missionary should be to learn from others and to share with others his own religious insights.

Bill: Are you in favor of one big religion for everybody then?

Deane: No. The particular elements are necessary. One does not have a tree without branches. But one should stress the power of growth within the tree and its branches—and not the branches *per se*.

Bill: Once again, you are destroying the uniqueness of the Christian gospel. You have replaced the tree by the branches.

Deane: Not according to my point of view! What is your view then?

Bill: It is our duty to know that our real rootage is in the gospel of Jesus Christ and to confess it to the entire world. Other religions do have fine ideas and insights, and we should learn from them. Moreover, we need to work constantly to improve our evangelistic methods. But the basic purpose of missionary work, even when we speak softly and honestly serve mankind's physical needs, and after patient delay, is to tell the entire world of God's glorious deed in Christ.

Deane: You recognize that the Moslems feel the same way about their religion.

Bill: Of course they do. And so do modern, clear-headed secularists in America. It will take every God-given resource at our command to convince the Moslems that they have gone astray. But just because the

task is difficult is no excuse for trying to avoid it. God has entrusted us with this commission. Would you just let the Moslems alone?

Deane: No. I would learn and share and seek to have them realize more fully the core of their faith, i.e., the love of Allah and the brotherhood of man. And I know that you bear no ill will toward the Moslems or any others who disagree with you.

Bill: Well, I'm glad you said that.
Deane: So what's your view of the nature of the Church?

Bill: The Church is the community of the faithful—those who have responded and are responding to God's revelation in Christ. The Church is, or ought to be, a redemptive society confessing the Lordship of Jesus Christ that has been called by God for the fulfillment of his purposes.

Deane: My view would be somewhat different. The Church consists of those people who are gathered together to seek to live in a right relationship with God and to do his will. It is a redemptive community in that it seeks for this relationship. But I believe that all persons are called by God—and not just the Christians.

Bill: Well, I certainly believe that God loves all his creatures but I'm convinced that he has called some into special fellowship and responsibility. But this does not mean that Christians are any better than non-Christians. In fact, we're in greater jeopardy than the nonbeliever because of the danger that we'll betray or fall short of God's trust in us given through the Christ of the Scriptures, of the Church, and of the heart.

Deane: Our time is up, Bill. We would not want everyone to feel they have to take sides and agree with one of us. But we would want them to become "existentially involved"—how about that!—in this discussion!

Bill: Amen, brother!

Deane: Now let's go play volleyball.

BOOK

THEOLOGY AND MODERN LITERATURE, by Amos N. Wilder (Harvard University Press, \$3), is the best introduction to the contemporary conversation between theology and literature we've seen. Mr. Wilder deals not only with some of the metaphysical and moral themes of modern literature and theology, but he gives a summary of the recent developments which are helping the "clerical lamb" and the "literary lamb" understand each other.

In the foreword Mr. Wilder discusses the similarity of the life of the artist and the Christian. For each life is strict. It means "selection, rejection, isolation, conflict for the believer as for the artist" (p. 6). Both the artist and the believer must break through the crust of convention which upholds the bulk of society and explore the mysterious, seldom-traveled subterranean caverns.

Mr. Wilder sees that the bridge which joins literature and theology cannot be supported by romantic, idealistic pontoon which rest merely upon the stream of life. This was tried in the Victorian age by Browning, Dickens, et al. Today

we turn not to the romanticists for their naïveté leaves us cold. Instead we feel more at home with Melville and Hawthorne who had no illusions about the reality and power of evil. It is better to let pseudo-Christian idealism and art remain completely divorced "than to insist on this kind of marriage of the two, for the kind of art it [Christian idealism] favors is precisely what alienates the true artist from religion" (p. 21). True religion and true art must be immersed in the stream of life, sinking their foundations into the rock bed of reality which supports life. "... when religion and art are rebaptized in a total life-experience they are first divided according to their distinct roles, and then may be drawn into a really valid interrelation and interpenetration" (p. 22).

The chapter, "The Cross: Social Trauma or Redemption," is pregnant with meaning for both the artist and the theologian. It is concerned with "a widespread heresy of Christians evident in exaggeration of and even obsession with the Cross in its aspects of pain" (p. 96). The artists often see this as masochistic or sadistic, and the disturbing fact for the church is that quite frequently the artists are right. Robinson Jeffers in his poetic drama

Dear Judas illustrates not only an artist's misconception of a religious theme but points out some dangerous emphases within the church. "The Cross of Christ should be a fountain of health and not of morbidity" (p. 109).

"At no point is the gulf wider between the church, or a large part of it, and the modern intellectual, than in the area of moral behavior and its presupposition" (p. 113). Two illustrations of stifling moral codes are found in the Puritan and Southern traditions. "There is a Puritan granite which strengthens, but there can be a Puritan granite which crushes. There is a Southern way of life which nourishes, and there is one which strangles" (p. 116). William Faulkner exposes this vestigial morality in his writing, but we fail to see all of Faulkner if we stop here for Faulkner also presents the positive side of the Christian shield.

This book is readable and informative. Mr. Wilder who is now Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard Divinity School writes from the side of the theologian, but his insight into modern literature is keen. He is one of those rare persons who is willing to admit that not all truth is limited to his field.

—Philip Holtsford

contributors

WILLIAM ROBERT MILLER is managing editor of *Fellowship*, magazine of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and is a welcomed contributor to *motive*.

JOSEPH SITTler, JR., a Lutheran, is on the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. Among his excellent writings is *Structure of Christian Ethics*, the Rockwell lectures on religion at Rice Institute, published by Louisiana State University press.

MALCOLM BOYD is surely known to our readers. After a successful career in advertising, he was general manager and partner with Mary Pickford and Buddy Rogers in a TV producing firm, and then became a priest of the Episcopal Church. This summer he became Episcopal chaplain to Colorado State University.

RANDY THRASHER graduated from Duke University in June, and on August 20 sailed for Okinawa. For three years he will serve as a short-term missionary under the direction of the Methodist Board of Missions, teaching English and working with the student Christian movement at the United Church of Christ, in Naha, Okinawa. His home is Baltimore.

ERNEST L. SNODGRASS is associate profes-

sor of humanities and academic assistant to the dean at Emory-at-Oxford, a division of Emory University. His own education was at Franklin College and the Divinity School, University of Chicago. He reads novels, plays, poems with students—from the works of Homer, he says, to William Faulkner.

MICHAEL DAVES, before entering the ministry, worked as a radio-television announcer. He is interested in religious journalism, and thinks of the magazine world as part of his parish. He has written for a dozen publications, and now adds *motive* to the list. Presently, he is pastor of First Methodist Church in Addison, Texas.

ROBERT HAMILTON STEWART is director of religious life at College of the Pacific, Stockton, California. He has degrees from Southern Methodist University and Southern California School of Theology. His ministry includes pastorates, religious education work, and six years as director of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Arizona.

DEANE W. FERM is a Presbyterian, a graduate of the College of Wooster, and has B.D., M.D., and Ph.D. degrees from Yale. Last summer, he left the Montana School of Religion, of which he was director, and became dean of the chapel at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.

WILLIAM E. RHODES, a native of Iowa, re-

ceived the first National Methodist Scholarship at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, then graduated with Phi Beta Kappa honors. His B.D. and Ph.D. are from Yale. He is now chaplain of the University of Denver.

PHILIP HOLTSFORD, graduate of Lambuth College and Vanderbilt Divinity School, has just moved from a pastorate near Jackson, Tennessee, to a Methodist church at the south edge of Chicago.

H. D. BOLLINGER is director of the Department of College and University Religious Life of the Methodist Board of Education.

WILLIAM CLYDE BROWN is a junior at Stanford University, majoring in creative writing. We present here the first of his works to be published anywhere. He is a native Californian, a Congregationalist, and a ventriloquist.

ARTISTS IN THIS ISSUE:

JEAN PENLAND, a Methodist and a full-time artist in Nashville, Tennessee; **JACK MORSE** teaches art and has just gotten his M.A. at Syracuse University; **ROBERT CHARLES BROWN**, part-time college student and full-time artist from Mystic, Connecticut; **JIM CRANE**, cartoonist par excellence, lives in Wisconsin with his wife and daughters and teaches art at Teachers' College, River Falls; and **JACK KELLAM** from Centre College, Danville, Kentucky.

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LOT'S WIFE

MARGARET RIGG

everyone

There was a small forest between a great, sentinel-like range of mountains and a vast desert. In the forest there lived two brown foxes who were unaware that animals should be mute. One fox was a little thin and had a crooked tail. The other might have been handsome except for his inveterate squint.

It was early evening, and the sun had just set behind the mountains. The fox with the crooked tail was inspired by the residual glow. "Look," he said to his friend. "Isn't it wonderful? Every morning the sun rises from the desert, and every evening it goes down behind the mountains. How wonderful and strange. . . ."

"How plain and ordinary," said the squinting fox. "It happens every day." He reached up behind his left ear with his left hind foot and scratched away a flea which had been bothering him.

They walked to a narrow river. It ran from the mountains through the forest and disappeared underground at the edge of the desert. As the foxes drank and got their noses wet, the thin one watched the distorted shape of a trout. "Look at the fish," he said. "I wonder how he lives in the river. . . . Say! we drink from the water; do you suppose he drinks from the air?"

The other fox said, "What difference does it make? Why are you always thinking about these things? The fish is just there for us to eat." With his right front paw he struck the trout from the water, and ate him.

"You know," said the thin fox, "sometimes I think I can see gray foxes in the mountains and red ones in the desert. I'd like to talk to them."

The squinting fox was growing tired of listening to his friend. He said, "You don't see anything. There isn't anyone else. We're everyone."

The other fox stirred the water with his paw. He thought a moment, and said, "The mountains and the desert are all around the forest. But what's behind the mountains and on the other side of the desert?"

The squinting fox grunted. "There isn't anything! Don't be silly! The world is the forest. The forest . . . that's all."

But the thin fox with the crooked tail did not hear. He was watching a star.

—WILLIAM CLYDE BROWN

motive